

Bicyclists take to the streets for Bike Arlington Heights

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From toddlers buckled into safety seats to intrepid senior citizens, biking enthusiasts of all ages took to the streets Saturday for the fourth annual Bike [Arlington Heights](#), a scenic, 14-mile spin through the village.

The free event, which kicked off at 9 a.m. at North School Park, attracted 100 bicyclists, who had the option of completing either a four-mile or 14-mile loop, officials said.

While all bicycle riders were urged to wear a helmet and be familiar with the rules of the road, Bike Arlington Heights neither was a race nor a fundraiser but rather, an opportunity to highlight the village as a bike friendly community, said David Easley, a member of the Arlington Heights Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, which organized this year's event.

"The weather was great, we had a nice turnout, and most important, we didn't have any falls or incidents," Easley said.

Briget Schwab, a village engineer and staff liaison for the commission, said the Bike Arlington Heights event both encouraged residents to improve their health with outdoor exercise and also raised awareness that while in Arlington Heights, "a lot of places are much closer than they seem."

"We're trying to change the mindset of residents, showing them that they can take their bikes to a lot of places in the village, instead of choosing to drive their cars," Schwab said.

Local bicyclists also are encouraged to attend a June 1 open house at the Arlington Heights Village Hall, where officials plan to unveil a proposed bike and pedestrian plan that was created with the assistance of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Easley said.

Denise Pignastaro finishes the short course during the Bike Arlington Heights event in the village. (Brian O'Mahoney / Pioneer Press)

"I really feel passionate about this beautiful community, and making Arlington Heights a safer and better place to ride bikes," he said.

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